

Letter of Information

S E C R E T

28 June 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Staff Personnel

SUBJECT : Letter of Information

GENERAL

1. Saigon Situation: The Saigon Bureau continued to operate under extremely hazardous conditions as the city was subjected to intensive Viet Cong rocket and mortar shelling on an almost daily basis. On 11 June during a heavy attack in the first, second, and third precincts several rockets impacted in the streets around the bureau and near the dwellings of Staff employees. The landline between the bureau and the Embassy communications center was disrupted several times during the month which made it necessary to hand carry tapes to the Embassy; this trip required an armed military escort during the 1900 to 0700 curfew period. [redacted]

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2. Paris Talks: The direct teletype circuit between London Bureau and the U.S. delegation in Paris is now in operation 12 hours daily, and pertinent traffic from the FBIS field bureaus to the delegation has reached an average of more than 18,000 words per day. New point-to-point Paris/Moscow/Hanoi radioteletype circuits, which were especially instituted by VNA for the Paris talks, are being monitored by the Caribbean, Okinawa, and West Coast bureaus. These circuits carry speeches, press conferences, etc. by both the American and Vietnamese sides. At the request of the U.S. Delegation 10 copies of the East Europe Daily Report were added to FBIS publications sent to Paris. Ten propaganda analysis support cables were sent to the delegation during the month. [redacted]

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3. Assassination of Senator Kennedy: The Propaganda Analysis Division issued a Special Report on 13 June reviewing and analyzing communist propaganda reaction to the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, in response to numerous expressions of interest in the tenor of Soviet, East European, and North Vietnamese reactions in particular. Advance distribution copies of this report were forwarded to Presidential Assistant Walt W. Rostow by higher authority. [redacted]

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S E C R E T

Group 1

Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

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SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

4. Propaganda Analysis: The Propaganda Analysis Division responded to a number of State Department inquiries on the content and background of current communist propaganda relating to the Paris talks. A 1 June NHAN DAN commentator article which, as transmitted by VNA in English, departed from the standard language in stating Hanoi's demand for a bombing cessation prompted a flurry of questions from the Research East Asia and Research Soviet Bloc branches of INR and from the State Department Vietnam Desk. More than 48 hours later, VNA corrected the passage to restore the standard language. At PAD's request Okinawa Bureau supplied versions of the passage in French and in Vietnamese that had been transmitted at the same time as the original VNA English. The standard language had been used in both cases, supporting the conclusion that the aberrant language in the original English version had been a VNA translation error. This conclusion was passed on to the Department and to the U.S. delegation in Paris.

The State Department Vietnam desk relayed an inquiry from Presidential Assistant Walt W. Rostow regarding a Moscow commentary which said "a direct approach to the National Liberation Front" must be made on "an end to the acts of war of South Vietnamese patriots." PAD advised the requester that the commentary was broadcast in German only, that it seemed designed to make the usual point that the South Vietnamese must settle their own affairs, and that it did not appear to have significant bearing on the Soviet position regarding U.S.-NFLSV contacts.

Other questions included requests for background on Hanoi propaganda treatment of Ambassador Harriman's various suggestions in Paris that speeches at the talks not be made public, and for information on treatment of the Paris talks by the North Vietnamese army paper QUAN DOI NHAN DAN as compared with treatment by the party paper NHAN DAN.

The 14 June report in the biweekly Special Memorandum series on "Vietnamese Communist Propaganda on the U.S. Elections," requested by the Director of INR reviewed Hanoi comment on the U.S. domestic political scene prompted by the assassination of Senator Kennedy. All Hanoi propaganda references to Senator McCarthy over the past three months were assembled for the office of the Director of INR, in a service for Secretary Rusk.

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5. Press and Document Exploitation: The London PMU has been assigned responsibility for processing current information from the French communist paper L'HUMANITE and the Italian communist paper L'UNITA. On 17 May the German Bureau published its last issue of the Weekly Report of the East German Press which had been distributed to more than 100 consumers; basic materials formerly carried in the "Report" are now being airpouched to Headquarters. The Bangkok Bureau has added the CEYLON DAILY NEWS, HINDUSTAN TIMES, HINDU, PAKISTAN OBSERVER and two Burmese-language newspapers to its press monitoring list. [REDACTED]

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Linguists from the USSR Division translated two TASS items from PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA of 15 June on the U.S.-Soviet consular convention in response to a priority request from the White House Situation Room, which had been alerted to the articles by Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin. An Asia Division linguist translated a 229-page Arabic document on the movement of communist country nationals in and out of Lebanon. Various French press sources were exploited in the Europe, Africa, and Latin America Division to obtain information concerning reports of French-Israeli cooperation in the field of rocketry. [REDACTED]

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6. Special Services: A copy of a 1956 letter by North Vietnam's General Giap, furnished by PAD, was supplied on request to the Department of State's Office of the Legal Advisor. In response to a request from the Special Research Staff, an Asian Division linguist translated a 25-page speech delivered in Budapest by Syrian communist chief Khalid Bakdash during a late March communist conference in which he attacked Rumania. A videotape supplied by the Key West Bureau provided confirmation of the whereabouts of Cuban President Dorticos, whose absence from public appearances for nearly two months had caused speculation about his health. [REDACTED]

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7. Support to U.S. Missions: The 374th Tactical Airlift Wing, Okinawa, was added as a lateral recipient for field bureau material on Far East topics. The U.S. Southern Command in the Canal Zone phoned Headquarters to request a substantial package of data on Soviet broadcasting and press efforts to and in Latin America, which was forwarded to the consumer through the Panama Bureau. [REDACTED]

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8. Texting Requirements: The first complete compilation of mandatory texting requirements was sent to all field bureaus during the month. [REDACTED]

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PUBLICATIONS

9. Supplements: The following supplements to the Eastern Europe Daily Report were published during the past month: "Materials on Internal Czechoslovak Political Developments, Volume X," dated 23 May, 45 pages (translated by the contractual facility); "Materials on International Scientific Session in East Berlin on Karl Marx's 150th Birthday, 2-4 May 1968," dated 24 May, 77 pages (prepared by the German Bureau); "Materials on Czechoslovak Political Developments, Volume I," dated 12 June, 87 pages (45 pages prepared by the contractual facility); "Materials on Czechoslovak Political Developments, Volume II," dated 14 June, 84 pages (40 pages translated by the contractual facility); "Materials on Yugoslavia Political and Economic Developments," dated 21 June, 58 pages. [redacted]

10. Reports Consolidation: A further reduction in the number of serial reports issued by the FBIS domestic contractual facility was achieved on 1 June when 12 translation series on Eastern Europe were consolidated into the following three publications: Translations on Eastern Europe: Political, Sociological, and Military Affairs; Translations on Eastern Europe: Economic and Industrial Affairs; and Translations on Eastern Europe: Scientific Affairs. This consolidation has reduced the number of serials from 138 a year ago to 84 at the present time. [redacted]

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11. New Title: The Foreign Press Digest: Communist China Agriculture has been retitled Foreign Press Digest: Communist China Military, Political, Economic Data. [redacted]

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12. New Bibliography: The Annotated Bibliography of FBIS Serial Publications has been updated and issued. A copy will be forwarded to each field bureau. [redacted]

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FIELD OPERATIONS

13. French Crisis Coverage: The domestic crisis in France required special coverage of the French radio by the BBC, which processed several speeches and statements by President DeGaulle. The Paris radio was covered closely during the short-lived AFP strike on 29 May, as was "Radio Europe No. One," a commercial longwave station with transmitters in West Germany, but programmed from Paris studios. Close coordination continued between the London Bureau and the Caribbean Bureau, which covers AFP, in connection with the French crisis. [redacted]

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14. Czech Monitor: The Czechoslovak monitor detailed by the BBC to the Austrian Bureau was extended twice, for a total of six weeks.

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15. Broadcasting Developments: Radio Peking on 22 May inaugurated a series of special English and French language programs beamed to Europe. The programs, strongly supporting the French revolutionaries, were suspended in early June.

An observation during early June indicated that Peking's Russian-language broadcasts, with up to five programs transmitted concurrently, is using an elaborate network of over 50 shortwave and mediumwave transmitters for at least one program during early morning hours in China. The transmitters being used are those employed to broadcast China's regional services during the day. The Hokkaido Bureau is covering as much of the Peking Russian service as its resources and Soviet jamming permit.

ENGINEERING

16. Bangkok Bureau: The Bangkok Bureau's lease has been extended to September 1975. This extension has made it practical for the bureau to augment its antenna system by installing six additional antennas. These antennas have improved reception and will facilitate a full-scale cruising survey.

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MISCELLANEOUS

17. Briefings and Visits: On 24 June Mr. Richard Cushing, Acting Director of the Voice of America, Mr. Francis Ronalds, Program Manager, and Mr. Russell Splane, Chief of IBS News Division, visited FBIS Headquarters.

Visitors to field bureaus included: Lt. Col. Walter M. Crandall, Commander, Support Detachment, 500th MIG, to the Okinawa Bureau; Lt. Col. L. R. Jones, Chief of Operations Division, Communications and Electronics Directorate, USSOUTHCOM, to the Panama Bureau; Messrs. France and Herschberger, VOA, to the London Bureau.

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18. Visits of Foreign Nationals: Bureau Chiefs should notify the Chief, Operations Group, well in advance concerning plans of foreign nationals to visit Headquarters. This is necessary to make appropriate arrangements for their admission to FBIS Headquarters offices.

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19. Editorial Assignments: As a normal policy editors will henceforth be limited to no more than two consecutive tours overseas without a Headquarters assignment. This is designed to enhance the career development of editors and to permit new editors to be assigned overseas more rapidly. [redacted]

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20. AEC Publication: FBIS has received from the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, Division of Intelligence, a copy of the AEC publication, "Selected Foreign Radio and Press Reports," a compendium of FBIS items of interest to AEC officials. [redacted]

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21. Commendations: A member of the political section of the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane visited the Bangkok Bureau 6 May with a congratulatory message from Ambassador Sullivan. The Ambassador sent word that he personally reads the bureau's file and finds it "indispensable." It was reported that copies of FBIS intercepts of Laotian communist clandestine radios are passed to the International Control Commission and Laotian Premier Souvanna Phouma. [redacted]

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U.S. Ambassador to Korea William Porter wrote a letter of appreciation to State/INR for an FBIS paper prepared for him by Asia Division concerning the Korean and Mongolian languages. The Ambassador described the paper as a "very interesting commentary." [redacted]

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ADMINISTRATION

22. Employee Conduct: Bureau chiefs are reminded that all staff employees are required to read [redacted] during the month of July. [redacted]

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24. Regulatory Issuances: The following regulatory issuances were disseminated: [redacted]

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25. Training: During the reporting period the following personnel attended training courses: [redacted]

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a. [redacted] Chief, ME/AF/WE/LA Branch, Publications Division - Advanced Intelligence Course, Defense Intelligence School, 19 February - 24 May.

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b. [redacted] Chief, Wire Services Staff, and [redacted] Chief, Political and Military Branch, USSR Division - Advanced Management (Planning) Course; 19 - 24 May.

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PERSONNEL

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26. New EmployeesAssignment

Editor, Publications Division

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Editor, Publications Division

27. ReassignmentsFromToActing Chief
Asia Division

Chief

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50X1Editor
London BureauEditor
Wire Services StaffTeletype Supervisor
Key West BureauTeletype Supervisor
Caribbean BureauEditor
Saigon BureauEditor
Publications DivisionEditor
Okinawa BureauEditor
Publications Division

Chief

Acting Chief
Asia Division

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Editor
Publications Div.Editor
Caribbean BureauArea Officer
Asia DivisionArea Officer
Europe/Africa/LA Division28. ResignationsFrom

Editor, Publications Division

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Clerk Typist, Publications Division

Area Officer, USSR Division

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29. Retirements

(Disability)

From

Special Assistant to Chief, Production
Group

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30. Awards:

[redacted] - Chief, Engineer, Mediterranean Bureau - Certificate of Distinction for meritorious performance of duty at the Mediterranean Bureau.

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[redacted] - Electronic Specialist, Mediterranean Bureau -
Certificate of Distinction for meritorious performance of duty at the
Mediterranean Bureau.

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[redacted] - Electronic Specialist, Mediterranean Bureau -
Certificate of Distinction for meritorious performance of duty at the
Mediterranean Bureau.

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The Saigon Bureau was awarded a "Citation for Meritorious Service" as a unit for "sustained extra effort and unusual devotion to duty by bureau personnel during the 1968 Viet Cong Tet Offensive." The citation, signed by the Director, FBIS, was forwarded to the bureau in late June. Copies of the citation were placed in personnel folders of bureau Staff and non-Staff employees on duty at the time of the Tet Offensive. [redacted]

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✓ Acting Director

Foreign Broadcast Information Service

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